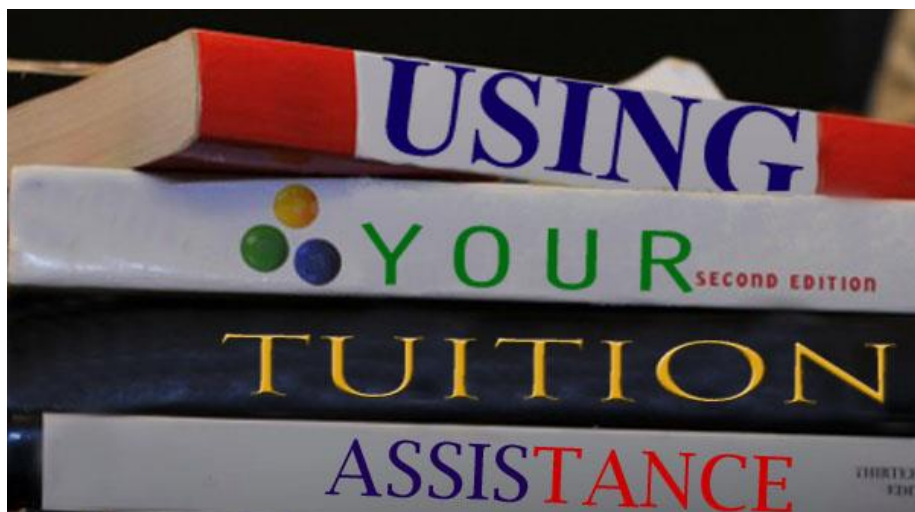


Every Member Counts

SOUTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD



THE FOCUS IS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS & FAMILIES, VETERANS, RETIREES & SURVIVORS

Apply Now for Fall 2018 Tuition Assistance Programs

SDNG State Tuition Assistance:

Air and Army National Guard service members must apply online at <https://apps.sd.gov/mv9gotuitionassistance/>

The SDNG STA program provides a tuition discount rate of up to 50% at SD public universities and up to 83.5% at Technical Institutes.

Applications are being accepted now for the fall 2018 school term **until 27 August 2018**.

Contact SPC Kayleigh Cihak at 605.737.6087 for more details or assistance.

Federal Tuition Assistance:

Army National Guard Soldiers must apply online at GoArmyEd: www.goarmyed.com/login.aspx

Recent policy changes have eliminated the 1-year wait and 10-year service requirement. The new policy requires a Soldier to complete Advanced Individual Training (AIT), Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC), or Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC) to use FTA for a bachelor's degree.

Soldiers can apply for up to 16 semester hours of coverage per fiscal year (OCT-SEP). This program covers tuition up to \$250.00 per credit and **applications must be submitted and approved up to seven days prior to the term start date** to guarantee funding.

Contact Ms. Linda Abbott at 605.737.6675 for more details or assistance.

Disclaimer: The announcements that appear on this page(s) or attached are intended to inform Soldiers, Airmen, veterans, and their families of special offers provided to Service Members, veterans and their families and are not intended to constitute an endorsement by the South Dakota Army and Air National Guard, the United States Army, the United States Air Force, or the Department of Defense. It is strictly intended to be used for informational purposes only.

August Family Focus

Mission: Service Member & Family Support enhances and empowers the lives of our customers with consistently exceptional service & support.

Service Member and Family Support

Phone: 1-800-658-3930

IN THIS ISSUE



Page 3



Page 7



Page 9



ASIST

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Page 11

Thank you to all the Campers and Volunteers at the 2018 SD Military Youth Camps: Shipwrecked and Explore!

177 campers and junior counselors attended Youth Camp this summer.

Thank you to our Volunteers - both on the ground and behind the scenes - you helped to make it all happen!

~ SDNG Child & Youth Program





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pentagon Announces Changes to Post-9/11 GI Bill

July 12, 2018

online at: <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/>

The Department of Defense issued a substantive change today to department policy on the transfer by service members in the Uniformed Services of "Post-9/11 GI Bill" educational benefits to eligible family member recipients.

Effective one-year from the date of this change, eligibility to transfer those benefits will be limited to service members with less than 16 years of total service (active duty service and/or selected reserves as applicable). Previously, there were no restrictions on when a service member could transfer educational benefits to their family members. The provision that requires a service member to have at least six years of service to apply to transfer benefits remains unchanged in the policy.

"After a thorough review of the policy, we saw a need to focus on retention in a time of increased growth of the Armed Forces," said Stephanie Miller, director of Accessions Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense. "This change continues to allow career service members that earned this benefit to share it with their family members while they continue to serve." She added "this change is an important step to preserve the distinction of transferability as a retention incentive."

If a service member fails to fulfill their service obligation because of a "force shaping" event (such as officers involuntarily separated as a result of being twice passed over for promotion, or enlisted personnel involuntarily separated as a result of failure to meet minimum retention standards, such as high-year tenure), the change will allow these individuals to retain their eligibility to transfer education benefits even if they haven't served the entirety of their obligated service commitment through no fault of their own.

All approvals for transferability of Post-9/11 GI bill continue to require a four-year commitment in the Armed Forces and, more importantly, the member must be eligible to be retained for 4 years from the date of election. This policy affects service members in the Uniformed Services which includes the U.S. Coast Guard as well as the commissioned members of the U.S. Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For more on the policy, visit <http://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/>.

Strong Bonds Workshop 2019 Registration Form

To reserve your spot – Please complete this form and:

Mail to: State Chaplain's Office, 2823 West Main St, Rapid City, SD 57702-8186 or

Email to: lynn.j.wilson.mil@mail.mil



CHECK (✓) date and location of your choice

_____ **19-20 January 2019 – Rapid City SD**
Strong Bonds for Couples

_____ **23-24 March 2019 – Sioux Falls SD**
Strong Bonds for Families

(Saturday 0800-1600 and Sunday 0800-1200)

Registration Deadline: As soon as possible for planning purposes

[Room Reservation Deadlines are 2 weeks prior to workshop](#)

Service Member's Name: _____ **Rank:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone (+ Area Code) _____ **E-mail** _____

Military Unit: _____

Spouse Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Spouse E-mail: _____

Childcare Requested: _____ **YES** _____ **NO** **Number of Children:** _____
(For approved events only)

Children's Names/Ages/Gender: _____

*A follow up letter confirming your registration and further details will be
sent to you upon receipt of this registration.*

Questions or additional information - Contact CH Lynn Wilson.

Email: lynn.j.wilson.mil@mail.mil or 605-431-5182

Building Healthy Relationships

Make your most important relationships even stronger. This new specialty consultation from Military OneSource helps you deepen relationships with family, friends and others through an education-based consultation. Building Healthy Relationships offers coaching sessions, practical tools, resources and problem-solving techniques. This consultation is designed to be flexible and personable, and is available to you by phone or video.

Identify your goals and boost your relationships

Everyone can benefit from boosting a relationship or improving communication. Perhaps you're a parent who wants to create a stronger bond with your child. Or maybe you're looking for ways to develop your communication skills.

This consultation offers a variety of tracks that are customized to different relationship dynamics. Your consultant will help you identify the track or tracks that are right for you. The personalized coaching sessions, educational tools, resources and empowering skills will help you be at your best. Building Healthy Relationships consultation tracks are designed so that you can do them from the comfort of your home.

- ***Building Healthy Relationships with Your Significant Other.*** This track focuses on providing educational resources, guidance on common issues couples can face being a part of the military culture and tools to support strong relationships. Consultations can include both or one partner.

- ***Healthy Parent-Child Connections.*** This track allows the parent to work with a consultant to identify relationship goals, with parents receiving education and resources to enhance these vital relationships. It is also possible for children to attend sessions with their parent as appropriate.

- ***Communication Refreshers.*** Communication can be one of the most important parts of a healthy relationship. This track offers individuals or couples educational webinars, inventories and services to improve the way they communicate with one another. This is an excellent path for those seeking to enhance communication with a spouse, colleague or family member.

- ***Staying Connected While Away.*** Part of military life can come with deployment and separations due to military duty. With this track, a consultant can assist service members or adult loved ones with identifying goals and resources to assist with emotional coping and keeping connected with that family member during these times.

- ***Reconnecting After Deployment.*** When service members return from deployment, a major shift can occur for the entire family. This track is tailored to the unique period of reintegration by assisting service members and/or family members with identifying goals and providing materials that can ease stress and shape resiliency.
- ***Blended Family.*** Couples may encounter new family dynamics when partners have children from previous relationships. This track focuses on co-parenting as a way to build a solid leadership unit for the military family, accounting for unique experiences and dynamics. This is an excellent path for those couples who are trying to introduce civilian children to military life.

Start building healthy relationships

Since this consultation is available by both phone and video, you can get started anytime. Call 800-342-9647 or start a live chat to schedule an appointment with a Building Healthy Relationships consultant.

Since this consultation is available by both phone and video, you can get started anytime. Call 800-342-9647 or start a [live chat](#) to schedule an appointment with a Building Healthy Relationships consultant. OCONUS/International? [Click here for calling options.](#)





Military Appreciation

★ August 2018 ★



★ 18 Holes with 1/2 Cart ★ \$32.75 ★

Book your tee time by calling 605.394-4191

online at www.golfatmeadowbrook.com

3625 Jackson Blvd., Rapid City, SD

To receive this offer, please show your military ID when checking in at the Golf Shop

Honoring all Current & Former Military Personnel



Is Troops to Teachers for You?

It's never too early to think about your life after separation and start exploring your options. Your next life-changing mission could be to become a teacher. Many service members transitioning to a civilian career find their skills naturally transfer to a career in teaching.

Troops to Teachers can help you identify your best path to teaching by providing counseling, guidance and help with meeting education requirements. You're eligible for the program if you're a current or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Troops to Teachers career resources include guidance on teacher certification and education requirements and leads on employment opportunities.

The program's financial help can pay for your education and licensure requirements.

There are also bonuses to encourage you to teach in certain types of schools or in a specific part of the country, and also for teaching subjects that are in demand, such as science, math or foreign languages. Time restrictions for registration and other requirements are involved, so contact a Troops to Teachers state or regional coordinator for more information.

For more information visit the [Troops to Teachers website](https://www.troopstoteachers.org/).



Central States Fair will host their annual Military Appreciation Day

Thursday, Aug. 23, at the fairgrounds in Rapid City all military personnel (active duty, Guardsmen, Reservists, retirees, and dependents/family members) **with military/DoD ID** will receive free admission to the fairgrounds (gates open at 12:00 p.m.), German Tent admission, and the Range Days Rodeo at 7 p.m.

The Range Days Rodeo opening ceremony will recognize five SDARNG Soldiers and five Airmen from Ellsworth AFB.

More information is available at:

<https://www.centralstatesfair.com/events/2018/military-appreciation-day->



YOU'RE INVITED

Family Movie Night in Sioux Falls



FREE POPCORN!!

BIG 6

Friday
Aug 17, 2018
7:00pm
 Sioux Falls RTI Theatre
 Sioux Falls SD





Please fill out your ticket and send to:
wendi.e.albers.ctr@mail.mil to register!
 or call 605.737.6089 with any questions

FREE CANDY!!

ADMISSION TICKET

Name		
Address		
Email		
Phone	Unit association	# of attendees
<p>FREE POPCORN FUN!</p> <p>7 PM Friday 17 August 2018 SIOUX FALLS, SD</p> <p>FAMILY FRG GROUP READINESS</p>		

FEATURE:
BIG HERO 6

R-S-V-D

to Wendi Albers
[at wendi.e.albers.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:wendi.e.albers.ctr@mail.mil)
605.737.6089



Army Echoes informs Retired Soldiers, surviving spouses, and their Families on changes to their benefits and entitlements, developments within the Army, and how they can continue to support the Army.

Where Can I Read Echoes ?

The current issue of Echoes is available in both high-resolution (PDF) and printer-friendly (PDF) formats. For past editions of Echoes, click here to visit the [Echoes archive](#).

How do I subscribe to Echoes ?

The best way to subscribe depends on your status. If you are:

- A Retired Soldier collecting retired pay or the surviving spouse of a Soldier who is collecting a Survivor Benefit Plan annuity, just ensure that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has your current mailing and email address. To update DFAS, create or update your myPay account.

You may also call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 or call the nearest installation retirement services officer, whose contact information is located [here](#).

- A "Gray Area" Soldier (in the Retired Reserve not yet collecting retired pay), just ensure the Reserve Retirements Branch at the US Army Human Resources Command has your current mailing and email address by calling them at 1-888-276-9472.

- A surviving spouse of a Soldier and are NOT collecting a Survivor Benefit Plan annuity, use our subscription form to receive Echoes electronically. If you prefer to receive it by mail, send your name and address to the editor at ArmyEchoes@mail.mil

- An Active Duty, National Guard, or Army Reserve Soldier, use our subscription form to receive Echoes electronically.

What is different about the electronic edition ?

In 2013, the Army increased the electronic edition of Echoes to 20 pages. Fiscal constraints prevent printing more than 16 pages in hard copy.

You can download the electronic edition on your iPhone, iPad, and Android phone using the free Echoes apps in the App Store (iOS) and Google Play (Android).

Electronic editions include links to additional information on external websites and to email addresses for RSOs and other resources.

Periodic email updates keep electronic subscribers updated between editions. To subscribe to the email updates, use our subscription form. Old editions are posted here and can be downloaded again if lost or deleted.





I WANT YOU

ENROLL IN VA HEALTH CARE

Did you deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn?

Then your service may have earned your access to VA health care benefits.
In order to take advantage of these benefits, you need to enroll in VA's health care system.
Contact your Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) today to get started!

Christian.m.johnson.ctr@mail.mil or 605-737-6669



South Dakota Army National Guard
G-1 / Suicide Prevention Program
**Applied Suicide Intervention
skills Training**



If you want to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide, this two-day workshop is for you.

ASIST is the most widely used intervention skills training in the **United States**.

There are three **ASIST** courses scheduled for FY18 and the hours of each class are from **0800-1600** both days.

- **8--9 September 2018 in Watertown Readiness Center, Rooms TBD**

Be part of a team improving the community
Help someone when they need it most

For more information about upcoming training or to RSVP please contact:

Dr. Bill Meirose

G-1 / Suicide Prevention Program Manager (SPPM)

605-737-6954 or William.j.meirose.ctr@mail.mil

Did you know?

The **Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) Program** serves Active and Reserve Component service members of **ALL** branches of the military **AND** Veterans who have dedicated themselves to serving our nation, often at great personal sacrifice. The program's principal role is to provide direction to Reserve Component service members so that they can secure all benefits, entitlements, and services earned through their military service with the compassion of someone who's been there.

You may not need assistance at this time, but you may have a friend or family member that could use some assistance.



Common services provided are:

- Requesting Military Service records
- Enrollment into the VA Healthcare
- Counseling on Education Benefits
- Supporting deploying and returning units
- Employment
- Tricare
- State specific benefits
- Navigating local, state and federal programs

I am a current service member in the SDARNG, an OEF-Afghanistan veteran, former full-time Soldier, education counselor and will put to use my skills and relationships to ensure your needs are met.

Contact Christian Johnson your TAA today at 605-737-6669 or christian.m.johnson.ctr@mail.mil

August Family Focus

Service Member and Family Support
South Dakota National Guard

2823 W. Main St, Rapid City SD 57702

1-800-658-3930



We also recommend that you like and follow us on [Facebook](#) as we continuously update new and exciting information.

Have suggestions of thing you would like to see in a future issue of the focus?
Please contact us!